


In [Unit 20](#), we discussed sthUla sharIra.

In Units [21](#) and [22](#) reviewed sUkShma sharIra (subtle body).

In [Unit 23](#), we understood other philosophies' description of the svarUpa of jIva. In this unit, we will study the shruti statements of the svarUpa of jIva.

svaRUpa of jIva.

In discussing the  subtle body, we understood that "the jIva is an entity other than the antah-karaNa, witnessing the coexistence of the antah-karaNa during deep sleep and relating it to the antah-karaNa when awake". So where is the jIva during deep sleep? The shruti statements answer as follows;

"sadA tadA sampannO bhavati, svam apItO bhavati"

- He is united with Reality (sat), He is merged with Atman " - chAndOgya 6.8.1

"parE Atmani sampratiShTtE"

- He is united with paramAtma" - prashna upanishat 4.7

"antar hridaya AkAshastrasminchatE"

- He is lying in the space of antar-hridaya" - brihadAraNyaka 2.1.17

"prAjnyEnAtmanA sampariShvaktah

- He is embraced by the wise Atman " -brihadAraNyaka 4.3.21.

shruti statements like these declare that the jIva in deep sleep is united with Brahman. So the daily experience of Jiva in deep sleep is Brahman. It does not mean that the jIva in waking and dream states is not Brahman (the jIva's focus being external, he is unable to experience it). This is confirmed in the chAndOgya (6.8.7)

"sa AtmA tat tvam asi shvEtakEto"

- That Atman, shvEtakEtu, you are

"nAnyO ato asti driShTA, nAnyO atO asti shrOtA, nAnyO atO asti manta, nAnyO atO asti vijnyAta"

- There is no other seen, there is no other heard, there is no other to realize, there is no other knower (other than the Atman) - chAndOgya 3.7.23.

"sa vA ESha mahAn aja AtmA yO ayam vijnyAnamayah"

- This knower (accumulating knowledge in the waking and dream states) is the supreme unborn Atman - brihadAraNyaka 4.4.22.

These statements of shruti guide us to understand the svarUpa of jIva.

mahAvAkyAs.

Two of the four mahAvAkyas (Distinguished Statements) of advaita philosophy point to the svarUpa of jIva. They are

"tat tvam asi"

- you are that - chAndOgya (6.8.7) and

"aham brahmAsmi"

- I am Brahman - brihadAraNyaka (1.4.10).

Both these distinguished statements are indicators of the svarUpa of jIva. The "tat tvam asi" statement is described as an instructional statement - the teacher advising the student that you are Brahman. The "aham brahmAsmi" statement is described as an experience statement - the student following the instructions of the teacher, contemplates on the nature of the self and experiences Brahman. The meaning of these statements are further described.

tat tvam asi

This phrase appears as part of several statements in chAndOgya upanishat. Two meanings-

1. Literal meaning - describing consciousness associated with upAdhi
2. Intended meaning - describing the pure consciousness are analyzed for this and all mahAvAkyas.

This is explained with an example below.

A red hot iron ball will burn our finger when it is touched. Descriptions of "iron ball burnt my finger" or "the heat of the red hot iron ball burnt my finger" both indicate that the burning principle is the fire aspect and not the iron aspect. The first description is conversational description, which combines the fire and iron aspects. The second is logical description; in this the object (iron) and upAdhi or association (fire) are separated. Similarly, in the mahAvAkyas "tat tvam asi - that you are", 'that' suggests Brahman, 'you' suggests jIva.

"jIva is Brahman" is the literal meaning. This does not separate the Atman and the jIva (Atman associated with the upAdhis of body, sense organs and mind). The intended meaning is "the consciousness in the jIva (separating the upAdhis from the jIva) is the Pure Consciousness Brahman. "That you are" suggests the Pure Consciousness Brahman through three relational aspects as follows ('tat' and tvam' are both in the nominative case; the relational aspects help understand the interpretation of the two subjects).

"sambandhatrayam nAma padayOh sAmAnAdhikaraNyam pada arthayOh vishEshaNa vishEshya-bhAvah pratyagAtma lakShaNayOh lakShya-lakShaN bhAvaschEti" -

The three relational aspects are -

(1) sAmAnAdhikaraNya - identical power or identical support; In the phrase "blue lotus", the blueness and lotusness are both supported by the blue lotus. The blue lotus supports blue and lotus identically; blue and lotus identically empower blue lotus

(2) vishEShaNa - vishEShya bhAva - The adjective describing the quality and the object to which the adjective is associated

(3) lakShya-lakShaN bhAva - The lakShya/lakShaN bhAva between pratyagAtma (individual self) and the intended meaning of 'tat tvam asi'

In this context, it is said as follows;

"sAmAnAdhikaraNyam cha vishEShaNavishEShyatA lakShya lakShaN sambandah padArtha pratyagAtmanAm iti"

Identical power/support, adjective and noun relationship and lakShya-lakShaN relation exists between object (meaning of tat and tvam) and pratyagAtma. Identical power/support In the statement "sah ayam dEvadattah - "He is this Devadatta"; 'He' refers to a Devadatta having an adjective of prior time, and the 'this' adjective describing present time Devadatta. Both Devadattas of prior and present time are supported by the same person Devadatta. Similarly, in the mahAvAkyas, the 'tat' having an adjective of 'that' and describing the Pure Consciousness and the consciousness described by the adjective visible and described by 'tvam', have both same support in the Pure Consciousness.

vishEShaNa-vishEShya Relation

He is the Devadatta related to a prior time; This is the Devadatta related to the present time. By rejecting any difference between the prior time Devadatta and the present time Devadatta, a relationship is established between 'He' and 'This' Devadatta. This relation is vishEShaNa-vishEShya Relation. Similarly, between the 'tat', having an adjective of invisibility (Pure Consciousness) and 'tvam', having an adjective of visible etc., if the mutual difference is rejected, the relationship is vishEShaNa-vishEShya bhAva relation.

lakShya-lakShaNa Relation

'He' is the Devadatta of the prior time; 'this' is the Devadatta of present time. The intended person is the same Devadatta. So by eliminating the attributes 'He' and 'this', the relation with the undifferentiated Devadatta is the lakShya-lakShaNa relation- the intended and literal person is the same Devadatta. Similarly in the mahAvAkya, by rejecting the attributes invisible and visible between 'tat' and 'tvam', the undifferentiated consciousness is the lakShya-lakShaNa relation between 'tat' and 'tvam' - The intended and literal entity is the Pure Consciousness. Another classification of lakShaNa (distinctive or identifying mark) is also described; it is of three kinds.

(1) jahat lakShaNa - ignoring (jahat) the literal meaning and taking only the intended meaning; For example, in the phrase "gangAyAm ghOSha - Village is in Ganga", obviously the village cannot be in the midst of the Ganga river; the intended meaning is 'the village is on the banks of the Ganga. Here the intended meaning is extracted by ignoring the literal meaning. This is jahat lakShaNa

(2) ajahat lakShaNa - interpreting the intended meaning by retaining (ajahat) the literal meaning; In the phrase "shONah dhAvati - red color is running", since red color cannot be running, an animal having red color is running is the intended meaning. Here the literal description 'red' is retained and the intended meaning is extracted. This is ajahat lakShaNa

(3) jahat-ajahat lakShaNa - ignoring a part of the literal meaning and retaining a part of the literal meaning; In the statement 'sah ayam dEvadattah', since it is the same Devadatta, ignoring the reference to time, 'he and this' and retaining the person Devadatta, the jahat-ajahat lakShaNa is established. This is also called bhAga lakShaNa or bhAga-tyAga-lakShaNa. The mahAvAkya "tat tvam asi" cannot be interpreted by jahat lakShaNa or ajahat lakShaNa. It has to be interpreted by jahat-ajahat lakShana only to extract that 'tat' and 'tvam' identify the same Pure Consciousness as follows. The statement 'tat tvam asi' indicates the union of visible and invisible consciousness. The opposing visible and invisible attributes are dropped. By doing so, the undifferentiated Pure Consciousness only is retained is suggested.

The mahAvAkya - Aham brahmAsmi

This mahAvakya states "I am Brahman". Here again, the union of the jIva consciousness 'aham' and the Pure Consciousness Brahman have to be inferred by bhAgalakShaNa as in 'tat tvam asi'. This statement is described as an experience statement versus the instructional statement of 'tat tvam asi'. When the teacher has instructed the student, following the teachings of shruti, the student contemplates on the description of Brahman described in the shruti. When he experiences that pure bliss, he exalts "aham BrahmAsmi" - I am that Brahman. This is the culmination of the quest of the student in the realization of Brahman. We will pick up the process of contemplation down the road. So far, we negated that jIva is the shtUla sharIra, or the sUkShma sharIra or the kAraNa sharIra. We also understood the svarUpa of jIva - that his svarUpa is the Pure Consciousness or Brahman. What is it that prevents the jIva from experiencing this svarUpa? This is the avidya or ajnyAna. We will next study the nature of ajnyAna.

Om shAntih, shAntih, shAntih (Om peace, peace, peace).

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